

# The Playful Knack of Meditation

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There is one chapter only.

## CHAPTER 1: MEDICINE AND MEDITATION

My beloved ones,

Man is a disease. Diseases come to man. but man himself is also a disease. That is his problem, and that is also his uniqueness; that is his good fortune, and that is also his misfortune. No other animal on earth is such a problem, such an anxiety, such a tension, such a disease, such an illness as man is.

But this very condition has given man all his growth, all his evolution, because disease means that one cannot be happy with where one is; one cannot accept what one is. This very disease has become man's dynamism, his restlessness - but at the same time it is also his misfortune because he is agitated, unhappy, and in suffering.

No other animal except man is capable of becoming mad. Unless man drives an animal insane, it does not go mad on its own, does not become neurotic. Animals in the jungle are not mad, but they become crazy in a circus. In the jungle, the life of an animal is not warped: it becomes perverted in a zoo. No animal commits suicide, only man can commit suicide. Two methods have been tried in order to understand and cure the disease called man. One is medicine, the other is meditation. Both of them are treatments for the same disease. It will be good to understand here that medicine takes a micro view of man - considers each disease in man separately. as a separate happening - and meditation considers man as a whole to be a disease. Meditation considers that the personality of man is the disease; medicine considers that diseases come to man - that they are something foreign, alien to man. But slowly this difference has diminished and medical science has also started saying; "Don't treat the disease, treat the patient."

This is a very important statement, because this means that disease is nothing but an indication of the way in which a patient is living his life. Every man does not fall sick in the same way. Diseases also have their own individuality, their own personalities. It is not that if I suffer from TB and you also suffer from TB, we will both be the same kind of patients. Even our TB's will present themselves in two different ways - because we are two different individuals. It can also happen that the treatment that cures my TB does not bring any relief to your TB. So deep down the patient is at the roots, not the disease.

Medicine catches the diseases in man superficially. Meditation gets hold of man from deep within. In other words, it can be said that medicine tries to bring health to a person from the outside, and meditation tries to make the person healthy from deep within. Neither can the science of meditation be complete without medicine, nor can the science of medicine be complete without meditation, since man is both body and soul.

In fact it is basically a linguistic mistake to say man is both. For thousands of years man thought that the body and the soul of a person were separate entities. This thinking gave birth to two very dangerous outcomes. One was that some people considered that only the soul was the man and they neglected the body. Such people brought about developments in meditation but not in medicine: medicine could not become a science; the body was totally disregarded. In contrast, some people considered man as only the body and negated the soul. They did a lot of research and made great development in medicine but took no steps towards meditation.

But man is both at the same time. And it is also a linguistic mistake to say "both at the same time"; it gives the impression that there are two things which are connected together, whereas, in fact the body and the soul of man are two ends of the same pole. Seen in the right perspective, we will not be able to say that man is body and soul. It is not so. Man is psychosomatic or somato-psychic - mind-body or body-mind.

According to me, that part of the soul which is within the grasp of our senses is the body, and that part of the body which is beyond the grasp of the senses is the soul. The invisible body is the soul, the visible soul is the body. They are not two different things, they are not two separate entities, they are two different states of vibration of the same entity.

Actually, the very notion of duality has harmed mankind badly. We always think in terms of two, and land up with problems. Initially, we used to think in terms of matter and energy; now we do not. Now we cannot say that matter and energy are separate. Now we say that matter is energy. The reality is that use of the old language is creating difficulties. Even to say that matter is energy is not right. There is something - let us call it X - which seen from one end is matter, while seen from the other end is energy. They are not two; they are two forms of the same entity.

Similarly the body and the soul are two ends of the same entity. Illness can begin from any of the two ends. It can start from the body and reach to the soul - in fact, the vibrations of whatsoever transpires in the body are felt in the soul. That is why it sometimes happens that a man is physically cured of a disease but he still goes on feeling ill. The disease has left the body, the doctor says there is no disease, but the patient still feels ill and refuses to believe that he is not sick. All the various investigations and tests indicate that clinically everything is alright, but the patient keeps on saying that he does not feel well.

These types of patients have really bothered doctors a lot, because all the modes of investigation indicate that there is no disease. But having no disease does not mean that you are healthy. Health has its own positivity. Absence of diseases is only a negative state. We might be able to say that there is no thorn, but that does not mean the presence of a flower. There is no thorn only indicates the absence of thorns. The presence of a flower is an altogether different matter.

So far the science of medicine has not been able to achieve anything in the dimension of what health is. Its whole work has been in the dimension of what disease is. If you question the science of medicine about diseases, it tries to give definitions, but if you ask it what health is, then it tries to deceive you. It says that when there is no disease, what remains is health. This is a deception, not a definition. How can you define health in relation to disease? It is like defining a flower in relation to thorns; it is like defining life in relation to death or light in relation to darkness. It is like defining a man in relation to a woman, or vice versa.

No, so far the science of medicine has not been able to say what health is. It can only tell us what disease is. Naturally, there is a reason for this. The reason is that the science of medicine only grasps the outer, and from the outside only disease can be understood. Health is only understood from where man's innermost being is, from where his soul is. In this respect the Hindi word swasthya is really wonderful. The English word health is not synonymous to swasthya. Health is derived from the word healing. Illness is associated with it: health means healed - one has recovered from illness.

Swasthya does not mean that, swasthya means one has settled within himself, one has reached to oneself, to the deepest point. And swastha, healthy means one has become rooted in oneself. That is why swasthya is not just health.

Actually there is no word in any other language in the world comparable to the word swasthya. All the other languages of the world have words which are synonyms to disease or to no-disease. The very concept of health that we carry is that of no-illness. In reality, having no-illness is necessary but not enough for swasthya. Something more is required, something that is possible from the other end of the pole, where our inner being resides. Even if a disease starts from the outside, its vibrations echo all the way to the soul.

Suppose I throw a stone into a calm lake: a disturbance occurs only at the place where the stone hits the water, but the ripples produced reach the banks of the lake where the stone did not hit. Similarly, the ripples of whatsoever happens to our bodies reach our souls. And if clinical medicine treats only the body, then what will happen to those ripples which have reached the faraway banks? If we throw a stone in the lake and only pay attention to the place where the stone has hit the water creating a momentary impression, what will happen to all those ripples that now have their own existence, independent of the stone?

Once a man falls ill, the vibrations of the disease travel all the way to his soul, and that is why the disease often persists even after the body has been given treatment and is cured. The disease persists because its vibrations echo all the way to the person's innermost being - and for this medical science has no solutions so far.

So medical science will always remain incomplete without meditation. We will be able to cure the disease but we will not be able to cure the patient. Of course, it is in the interest of the doctors that the patient is not cured, that only the disease is cured but the patient should keep coming back!

Disease can also originate from the other end. Actually, because of the state man is in, diseases are already present there, because of the state man is in, there is a lot of tension inside him. I have already said that no other animal is dis-eased in this manner, is restless in this manner, is in such a tension - and there is a reason for this. No other animal's mind has this idea of "becoming." A dog is a dog; it does not have to become one. But a man has to become man, he is not one already. That is why we cannot say to a dog that he is a little less than a dog. All dogs are equally dogs. But in the case of man, we can reasonably say him that he is a little less of a man. Man is never born in his completeness.

Man is born in an incomplete state. All other animals are born in their completeness. It is not so with man. There are certain things he will have to do in order to become complete. This state of incompleteness is his disease. That is why man is troubled twenty-four hours a day. It is not - as we commonly think - that only a poor man is in trouble because of his poverty. What we do not realize is that on becoming rich, only the level of trouble changes but the trouble remains.

The truth is that a poor man never gets into such anxiety as a rich man, because the poor man has at least a justification for his problems - that he is poor. A rich man does not even have that justification; he cannot even pinpoint the reason for his anxiety. And when anxiety is without any apparent cause, it becomes terrible. A reason gives you some relief, some consolation, because then you have some hope that you may be able to remove the reasons. But when some trouble arises without any reason then the difficulties increase.

Poor nations have suffered a lot, but the day they become rich they will realize that rich countries have their own sufferings.

I would like you to choose a rich man's sufferings, not a poor man's. If it is a question of choosing sufferings, then it is better to choose those of a rich man. But the intensity of restlessness will be heightened.

Today, America faces a greater level of restlessness and anxiety than any other country in the world. Although no other society has ever had the facilities that are available in America today, it is in America that, for the first time, disillusionment has taken place and illusions have been broken. Man used to think he was in anxiety because of some reason. In America, it has become clear that man is not in anxiety for any reason; man himself is the anxiety - he invents new anxieties for himself. The personality within him goes on continuously demanding things that are not there, and that which he does have goes on becoming more meaningless every day. That which has already been achieved becomes meaningless, futile; that which he doesn't have, attracts. There is a continuous striving for those things which he does not have.

Nietzsche has said somewhere that man is a bridge stretched between two impossibilities: always eager to achieve the impossible, always eager to become complete. It is out of this eagerness to become complete that all the religions have been born.

It will be useful to note that there was a time on the earth when the priest was also the physician, when the religious leader was also the doctor; he was both the priest and the doctor. And it will not be surprising if we end up with the same Situation again tomorrow. There will only be a slight difference: now the one who is a physician will be the priest! This has started happening in America, because for the first time it has become clear that the question is not of the body alone. And also it has come to light that if the body is completely healthy, then there is a manifold increase in Problems, because for the first time the person Starts perceiving the diseases which are present within him, at the opposite pole from the body.

Our perceptions too need causes. It is only when a thorn pricks your foot that you feel it. As long as no thorn pricks it, you remain unaware of your foot. But when there is a thorn in your foot, your whole being becomes like an arrow pointed towards your foot; it notices the foot and nothing else - naturally. And if the thorn is removed from the foot, then too the being notices something.

If your hunger is satisfied, good clothes are available to wear, your house is in proper order, you get the wife you wanted. Although there is no bigger calamity in this world than this! There is no end to the sufferings of a person who gets the wife he wanted. If you do not get the wife you want, then at least you can derive some happiness out of hope. That too is lost once you get the wife you want.

I have heard about an asylum. A man had gone to see the asylum, and the Superintendent took him around on a tour. Stopping in front of a particular cell the man asked the Superintendent what was wrong with the inmate.

The Superintendent replied that the man had gone mad because he could not get the woman he was in love with.

In another cell the inmate was trying to break the bars, was beating his chest, was pulling at his hair. When asked what was wrong with this man, the Superintendent replied, This man got the same woman the other one could not get - and he became mad!"

But because he could not get his beloved, the first person used to keep her photograph near his heart and was happy in his madness, while the second person was beating his head against the bars.

Fortunate are those lovers who do not get their beloveds!

In fact, we hope for whatever we have not achieved so we can go on living in that hope. Once we have achieved it our hopes are shattered and we become empty. The day doctors make man free from his physical Problems he has to take on the other part of the work. The day man becomes free from bodily diseases he is being provided with the Situation in which he can become aware of his inner diseases. For the first time he will be troubled inside and will wonder why if everything on the surface is alright nothing seems to be really right.

It is not surprising that in India, twenty-four tirthankaras were the sons of kings; and Buddha was a king's son, Rama and Krishna were all from royal families. For these people troubles had disappeared at the bodily level; being troubled had begun from within.

Medicine tries to free man from diseases superficially, at the level of the body. But remember, even when he is freed from all his diseases, man does not become free from the basic disease of being man. That disease of being man is the desire for the impossible. The disease of being man means not being able to be satisfied with anything, that disease of being a man means making all that one achieves futile and attaching significance to whatever one has not got.

The cure for the disease of being a man is meditation. Physicians have the cure, medicine has the cure, for all other diseases, but for this particular disease of being man only meditation has the cure. Medical science will be complete the day we understand the inner side of man and start working with that too, because according to my understanding, the diseased person who is sitting within us creates a thousand and one illnesses at the level of the body outside.

As I have already said, whenever the body becomes ill, the vibrations, the ripples reach up to the inner being. Similarly, if the inner being is diseased then the ripples reach the outer level, the body.

This is why there are so many "pathies" - Systems of medicine - in the world. It would not be so if pathology, the study of the essential nature of diseases, were a complete science. But it becomes possible because man has thousands of types of diseases. Some types of diseases cannot be cured with the help of allopathy. For those diseases which originate in the interiority of man and travel to his periphery, allopathy is useless. For those diseases which start on the outside and move towards the interiority, allopathy is very successful. Those diseases which reach the outside from within are not bodily diseases at all; they simply manifest at the body level. Their level of origin is always psychological, or still deeper - spiritual.

Now, if a person is suffering from a disease in his psyche, this means no physical medication can give him any relief. In fact it may be harmful, because the medication will try to do something and in that process, instead of giving relief it is bound to do some harm. Only those medicines which actually have no potential for giving relief to the physical illness also have no potential for causing any harm. For example, homeopathy does not harm anyone, because there is no question of any relief from it either.

But homeopathy does give relief. It has no actual potential for providing relief but that does not mean that people do not get relief. But to get relief is one story; to give relief is an entirely different story. These two things are two separate phenomena. People get relief because if the person is creating the disease at the level of his psyche then all he needs is some placebo for it: he needs some placebo for his disease. He needs some consolation, some assurance from the placebo. His confidence has to be regained: that he is not actually sick, but is just carrying the idea that he is sick. That is all. This is why this end result can also be achieved with ashes from some mendicant, can also be achieved with some holy water from the Ganges.

Nowadays a lot of experimentation is going on with what you may call illusory medicine, placebos. If ten patients are suffering from the same disease, and if three of them are treated allopathically, three with homeopathy, and three with naturopathy, then an interesting result is seen: each of these 'pathies' is affecting the same percentage of people for good and for bad. There is not much difference in the proportions. This does produce some food for thought.

What is going on?

According to me, allopathy is the only scientific medicine. But since something in man is unscientific, scientific medicine alone will not do. Only allopathy deals with the human body in a scientific manner, but allopathy cannot cure one hundred percent, because man, in his inner being, is also imaginative, inventive, and projective. Actually a person on whom allopathy does not work is sick because of some unscientific reason.

What does it mean to be ill due to some unscientific reason? These words may sound very strange. You know that there can be scientific medical treatment and there can also be unscientific medical treatment. I am saying to you that there can also be scientific sickness and unscientific sickness - unscientific ways of falling sick. All the diseases which start at the level of the psyche of a person and manifest at the level of the body, cannot be cured in a scientific way.

I know a young woman who went blind. But the blindness was psychological - actually her eyes were not affected. Eye specialists said that the eyes were alright, the girl was deceiving everyone. But the girl was not deceiving anyone, because even if you led her towards the fire she would go into the fire; she would stumble against a wall and injure her head. The girl was not pretending; she really could not see with her eyes. But this disease was beyond the physicians.

This girl was brought to me and I tried to understand her. I came to know that she was in love with someone but her family members had stopped her from seeing that person. When I repeatedly questioned her, she replied that she had no desire to see anyone else in the world except her lover. This determination not to see anything except her lover... And if this sort of intensity is present in a person's determination, the eyes can become psychologically blind. The eyes will become blind, the eyes will stop seeing anything. This cannot be understood by seeing the anatomy of the eyes, because the anatomy is normal, the mechanism of seeing is functional - but the seer who used to be behind the eyes has slipped away, has removed herself from there. We experience this in our day-to-day life, only we are not aware of it. The mechanism of our body functions only while our presence is there behind it.

Now consider a young man playing hockey who gets injured in his leg. He is bleeding but he does not realize it. Others can see that he is bleeding but he himself has no inkling of it. Then, when the play is over after half an hour, suddenly he grasps his leg in pain, asking when he got hurt; it is hurting a lot. Now half an hour has passed since he was injured. The injury in his leg is a reality, the sensory mechanisms in his leg are working absolutely well - it is they who finally informed him about the pain after half an hour. So why was this information not conveyed earlier?

His attention was not there with the leg, his attention was on the play. And so great was his attention on the play that there was nothing of it left to notice his leg. The leg must have kept on informing him - the muscles, the nerves must have sent impulses; the leg must have knocked on all possible doors, it must have rung the exchange - but the man at the exchange was asleep. He was fast asleep or he was present somewhere else. He was absent, he was not present. When he returned after half an hour, then he noticed that there was an injury to his leg.

I told the girl's family to do one thing. I told them that since she is not allowed to see the person she wants to see, she has committed a partial suicide - a suicide of her eyes: "Nothing else is the matter with her except that she has gone into a phase of partial suicide. Let her lover meet her."

They said, "What has that got to do with the eyes?"

I asked them to just try it for once. And as soon as she was informed that she would be allowed to meet her lover and that he would arrive at five o'clock, she came and stood at the door. Her eyes were alright.

No, this is not deception. Experiments in hypnosis have shown us that there is no place for deception. I am telling you this from my own experiments. If a deeply hypnotized person is given an ordinary pebble in his hand and told that it is a piece of hot coal, he will behave exactly the way he would with a hot ember in his hand. He will throw it away, he will start shouting, wailing that he has been burned. Up to this point it can be easily understood. But he will also get blisters on his hands - and then the difficulty arises. If you can get blisters merely from the idea that there is burning coal in your hand, then it is dangerous to begin the treatment of these blisters at the level of the body. The treatment for these blisters should start at the level of the mind.

Since we consider only one end of man, we have been able to slowly eliminate diseases which affect the body, but the diseases originating from the mind have increased.

Today, even those who think only in terms of science have started agreeing that at least fifty percent of diseases are of the mind. This is not so in India, because for diseases of the mind, first a strong mind is required. In India we still see that about ninety-five percent of diseases are of the body, but in America, the proportion of diseases of the mind are increasing.

Diseases of the mind usually begin from within and spread to the periphery; they are outgoing diseases, while those of the body are ingoing. If you try to treat the bodily manifestations of the mental disease, then it will immediately find some other means of manifestation. We may be able to stop small trickles of mental disease from one place or a second or a third, but it will certainly manifest at a fourth or fifth place. It will try to manifest from the weakest spot in the personality of the individual. That is why so many times a physician is not only unable to treat a disease, on the contrary, he helps it multiply into various forms. What could have been eliminated through one location Starts coming out in various places, in various ways, because we go on creating obstructions to it.

According to me, meditation is the cure at the other end of the human being. Naturally, medicines depend on matter, their Chemical constituents; meditation depends on the consciousness. There can be no tablets for meditation, though people are trying: LSD, mescaline, marijuana - thousands of things are being tried. Thousands of efforts are going on to produce pills for meditation. But you can never have any meditation pills. Actually, trying to make such pills is the same old stubbornness of only treating from the level of the body, of making all the treatments only from the outside. Even if our psyche is affected inside, we will still treat from the outside, never from within. Drugs like mescaline and LSD can only produce an illusion of inner health; they cannot create inner health. We cannot reach man's innermost being through any Chemical means. The deeper we go within the more the Chemical activities lessen. The deeper we go within man, the less meaningful the physical and material approach Starts becoming. Only a nonmaterial approach, or we could say a psychic approach, has meaning there.

But it has not been achieved so far because of some prejudices, some bias. Interestingly, doctors are one of the two or three most orthodox professions in the world. Professors and medical doctors list highest among the most orthodox people. They do not let go of old ideas easily. There are reasons for this - perhaps quite natural reasons. The most prominent among them is that if doctors and Professors drop old ideas quickly, easily, and become flexible, then they will have a difficult time teaching youth. If things are fixed, then they are able to teach efficiently. Ideas should be definite, solid, not shaky and fluid; then they have confidence while teaching them.

Even criminals do not require the amount of confidence that a professor requires. He should have self-confidence that what he is saying is absolutely right. But whosoever has the Professional need of being absolutely right becomes orthodox. Teachers become orthodox. This does great harm, because education should be the least orthodox in every sense; otherwise there will be obstacles in the path of progress. This is the reason why usually no teacher is an inventor. There are so many Professors in all the universities but inventions, discoveries are made by the people outside. More than seventy percent of the Nobel Prizewinners are people from outside the universities.

The other profession that is full of orthodoxy is that of the doctors. That too has its Professional reason. Doctors have to make decisions very fast. If they Start contemplating when the patient is on his deathbed, then only the ideas will remain, the patient will be dead. If the doctor is very unorthodox, liberal, and practices new theories, does new experiments every time, then too there is a danger. All those who

have to make instant decisions rely mainly on past knowledge, old knowledge; they do not want to get caught up in new ideas.

Those people who are making decisions on the spot every day have to rely on past knowledge, and that is why the medical profession runs behind medical research by about thirty years. This results in many patients dying unnecessarily, because what should not be practiced today is actually being followed. But this is a Professional hazard. And so some of doctors' concepts are deep down very fundamentalist. One of them is their faith in medicine more than in the man himself - more faith in the Chemicals than in the consciousness; more importance given to Chemistry than to consciousness. The most dangerous outcome of this attitude is that as long as Chemistry is given sole importance, no experiments will be done on consciousness.

Here I would like to talk about a few such examples so that you might get some idea.

To have painless labor during the birth of a child has been a very old problem; how to bear a child without pain has been a question for a long time. Of course the priests are against this. Actually the priests are against the very idea that the world should be free from pain and suffering, because they will be out of job if there is no pain in this world; their profession will have no meaning. If there is pain, suffering and misery, then there is a call, a prayer. Maybe even God might get totally neglected if there is no suffering in the world. People may hardly pray, because we remember God only in suffering. Priests have always been against painless labor. They say that the pain during labor is a natural process.

But it should not be there. To call it an arrangement of God is a false idea. No God wants to give pain during childbirth. The doctor believes that for the painless birth of a child some medicine should be given, some Chemicals should be arranged, anesthesia should be given. All these doctors' remedies Start at the level of the body, meaning that we get the body in such a state that the mother does not realize that she is in pain.

Naturally women themselves have been experimenting with this on their own for centuries. That is why seventy-five percent of babies have to take birth during the night. It is difficult in the daytime because a woman is very active and aware at that time. During the night she goes to sleep, she is more relaxed. And so, seventy-five percent of babies do not get a Chance to be born when the sun is shining; they have to be born in the darkness. When the woman is sleepy, she is more relaxed and it is easier for the baby to be born. A mother Starts creating obstacles for the child right from the moment it is about to be born. Of course later on she manages to create so many obstacles for the child, but she begins causing hindrances for the child even before it is born.

One of the remedies is to do something through medication so that the body becomes relaxed as it is during sleep. These remedies are being followed, but they have their own drawbacks. The biggest drawback is that we do not trust at all in the consciousness of the person. And as this trust in the human consciousness goes on decreasing, the consciousness Starts disappearing.

A doctor called Lamaze has trusted in human consciousness and has managed thousands of painless deliveries of babies for women. This method is of conscious Cooperation - that the mother tries to cooperate meditatively, consciously, during the delivery, that she welcomes it, does not fight against it or try to resist it. The pain that is produced is not because of the childbirth but because of the fight the mother makes against it. She tries to constrict the whole mechanism of childbirth. She is in fear that it will be painful, she is afraid of the labor. This fear-centered resistance is preventing the child from being born while the child is trying to be born; there is a tussle between the two; there is a clash between the mother and the baby. This conflict is responsible for the pain. This pain is not natural: it is only from the clash, from the resistance.

There are two possible ways to solve this problem of resistance. You can sedate the mother, if you are working at the level of the body. But the thing to remember here is that a mother who delivers her child in a state of unconsciousness can never become a mother in the fullest sense. And there is a reason for this. When a child is born, not only is a child born but a mother is also born. The birth of a child actually is two births: on the one hand a child is born and on the other an ordinary woman becomes a mother. And if the baby is born in the state of unconsciousness, we have managed to distort the basic relationship between the mother and the child. The mother will not be born, only a nurse will be left behind in the process.

I am not in favor of delivering a child by sedating the mother with the help of Chemicals or using superficial means. The mother should be fully conscious during the delivery, because in that very consciousness the mother is born too. If you realize the truth of this matter, then it means that the mother's consciousness should be trained for the delivery. The mother should be able to take the childbirth meditatively.

Meditation has two meanings for the mother. One is that she should not resist, should not fight. She should cooperate with whatever is going on. Just like a river which flows wherever there is a depression in the earth, just as the winds are blowing, just like the falling of the leaves - no one gets an inkling of it and the dry leaf just falls off the tree - similarly she should be in total Cooperation with the process that is unfolding. And if the mother gives her total Cooperation during the delivery, does not fight against it, does not become afraid, becomes fully and meditatively immersed in the event, then there will be painless birth - the pain will simply vanish.

What I am telling you has a scientific basis. Many experiments have been done using this method. She will become free from pain. And remember, this will have far reaching results.

Firstly, we Start harboring an ill feeling towards the thing or person that produces pain in us from the very first moment of contact. We fall into a sort of enmity with the person with whom we encounter a struggle in our very first experience. This becomes an obstacle to forming a friendly relationship. It is difficult to create a bridge of Cooperation with a person with whom we fell into conflict from the very beginning. It will be superficial. But that moment when we will be able to deliver a child with Cooperation and in full awareness. This is very interesting: until now we have only heard the expression "labor pains," we have never heard the expression "labor bliss" - because it has not taken place so far. But if there is full Cooperation, then "labor bliss" will also happen.

So I am not in favor of painless birth, I am in favor of blissful birth. With help from medical science, at the most we can achieve painless birth but never blissful birth. But if we approach it from the side of consciousness, then we can have blissful birth. And right from the first moment we will be able to build a conscious inner connection between the mother and the child.

This was only an example to put across to you that something can be done from within too. Whenever we fall sick, we are trying to fight the sickness only from the outside. The question is: is the patient really ready to fight the sickness from the inside? We never bother to find this out. It is quite possible that it is a self-invited disease. The number of self-invited sicknesses is large. Actually very few diseases come on their own, most of them are invited. Of course, we had invited them long before they came; hence we are unable to see any connection between their arrival and our invitation.

For thousands of years many societies in this world could not form a connection between sexual intercourse and childbirth because the time difference was big - nine months. It was difficult for them to relate such a distant cause and effect. And then not all intercourse lead to childbirth, so obviously there was no reason for thinking in terms of connecting the two. It was much later on that man understood that what had happened nine months ago was resulting in a childbirth today. He could form a cause and effect relationship. The same happens to us regarding illness. We invite it at some time, but it will come later on. Much time passes between the two events, and that is the reason we are unable to see any connection between the two.

I have heard of a man who was on the verge of becoming bankrupt. He was afraid to go to the market, to his shop. He was afraid even to walk on the streets. One day as he was coming out of his bathroom he fell down and was paralyzed. Now all sorts of treatments are being given to him. But we do not want to accept that the man wanted to become paralyzed. He did not think about this consciously, but that is not the point. Nor does it matter whether he did or didn't conceptualize to get paralyzed in his mind - most probably he never thought of it. But somewhere, deep inside his mind, in his unconscious, he must have wanted not to have to go to the market or to the shops or walk on the streets. This is the first thing.

Secondly, he also wanted the hostilities towards him to stop in some way and for some sympathy to begin instead. These were his deep desires. Obviously his body would Support him. The body always follows the mind like a shadow; it will always Support the mind. The mind makes the arrangements. Actually we never realize what arrangements the mind makes for us. If you have fasted for the whole day, then you will have a meal in the night - the mind will see to that. It will say to you that you have fasted for the whole day, you must be uncomfortable: "Let's go to a feast at the king's palace!" And you will eat there in the night in your dreams.

The mind arranges for everything that the body cannot do. So most of the dreams we see are just like these - just substitutes. What we could not do in the day we do in the night. Mind arranges all these things. If suddenly in the night you feel like going to the bathroom, then it means that the mind is sounding an alarm. It can send you to the bathroom in your dream and you will feel less strain on your bladder. You will think that that is alright and that you have been to the bathroom. The mind arranges things so that your sleep is not disturbed. Throughout the day and night, the mind is constantly making arrangements so that all your known and unknown desires are fulfilled.

This man had an attack of hemiplegia and he fell down. Now we are trying to treat that. But actually the medicines might harm him, because he does not have hemiplegia; he has brought the disease upon himself. Even if we treat his paralysis then he will manifest a second or a third, or maybe a fourth disease. Actually, until he gathers courage to go to the market he will suffer from one disease or another. And as soon as he falls ill, he realizes that the whole Situation has changed. Now he has some justification for going bankrupt. "What can I do? - I am paralyzed!" Now he can tell his creditors, "How can I repay you? You can see the condition I am in." Actually, when the creditor will come to him, he himself will feel ashamed to ask for the money. His wife will take better care of him, his children will serve him better, his friends will come to meet him, people will surround his bed.

In fact, we never Show our love to anyone until he falls sick. So whoever wants to be loved has to fall sick. Women are always falling sick, and the main reason is that this is the way for them to get love. They know there is no other way of keeping their husbands at home. The wife cannot keep him, but the illness can. Once we realize this, and if this gets fixed in our minds, then every time we want some sympathy we will fall sick. Actually it is dangerous to Show sympathy to a sick person; you should only treat the person's illness. It is dangerous because through sympathy you may be making his disease more palatable, and this will be harmful.

No medicine will cure this person who has had paralysis; at the most he will keep changing diseases, because in reality he does not have the disease, it is just deep auto-suggestion: his hemiplegia is mental in origin.

There is a similar story about another man who was also suffering from hemiplegia. He was suffering for two years and he could not even get up. One day his house caught fire and everybody ran out of the house. Suddenly they panicked and wondered what would happen to the sick man. But then they saw him coming out - he was running - and this person could not even sit up before. And when his family pointed out to him that he could walk, he said that that it couldn't be possible and he collapsed then and there.

What happened to this man? - and he is not fooling anybody. His disease was mind-oriented, not body-oriented. That is the only difference, and that is the reason why when a physician tells a patient that his disease is in the mind, the patient does not like it because it seems to convey that he is unnecessarily pretending to be sick. Now this is not right. No one wants to pretend that he is ill. There are mental reasons for falling sick, and these reasons are as important or maybe more important than reasons for falling sick because of some actual physical problem. And it will be mistreatment on the part of the physician to tell someone, even by mistake, that he is mentally ill. The patient will not feel better with this Statement; in fact he will feel bitter towards the doctor.

We haven't yet been able to develop a kindly attitude towards mind-oriented diseases. If my leg is hurt then everyone will be sympathetic, but if my mind is hurt then people will say that this is a mental disease - as if I have done something wrong. If my leg is hurt then I get sympathy, but if I have a mind-oriented disease then I am blamed as if it is my fault! No, it is not my fault.

Mind-oriented diseases have their own place, but physicians don't accept this. This reluctance is because they only have treatment for body-oriented diseases, for no other reason. It is beyond him, so he just says that this is not a disease. Actually he should say that this is beyond his scope. He should advise you to find a different type of doctor - or he himself should try to become a different type of doctor. This person actually needs a treatment which will Start from within and then move outwards. And it is possible that a very small thing can change his inner life.

According to me, meditation is a treatment that spreads from the inside out.

One day somebody went to Buddha and asked, "Who are you? Are you a philosopher, or a thinker or a saint or a yogi?"

Buddha replied, "I am only a healer, a physician."

This answer of his is truly marvelous: "I am a physician; I know something about the inner diseases and that is what I discuss with you."

The day we understand that we will have to do something about these mind-oriented diseases otherwise we will never be able to eradicate all the body-oriented diseases completely, we will see that religion and science have begun to come closer to each other. That day we will see that medicine and meditation have begun to come nearer to each other. My own understanding is that no other branch of science will help as much as medicine in bridging this gap.

As yet, Chemistry does not have any reason to come close to religion. Similarly physics and mathematics have no reason to come close to religion as yet. Mathematics can survive without religion and I think this will remain true forever, because I do not see a Situation where mathematics will need the help of religion. I cannot conceive of a moment when mathematics will feel that it cannot develop without religion. That day will never come. Mathematics can keep its game going for eternity, because mathematics is only a game, it is not life.

But a physician is not playing a game, he is dealing with life. Most probably it is the medical doctor who will become the first bridge between religion and science.

Actually it has already started happening, especially in the more developed and understanding nations. The reason is that the doctors have to deal with human lives. It is what Carl Gustav Jung said just before dying. He said: "Based on my experience of being a physician, I can say that basically the illnesses of all the patients who came to me after the age of forty were because of a lack of religion." It is a very surprising point. If somehow we can give them some kind of religion then they will become healthy.

This is worth understanding. As the life of a person declines... Until the age of thirty-five it is on the rise, then it Starts moving down. Thirty-five is the peak. So it is possible that up to the age of thirty-five a person may not find any value in meditation, because until then man is body-oriented; the body is still on the rise. Perhaps all the diseases in this stage are of the body, but after the age of thirty-five the diseases will take a new turn, because now life has started moving towards death. And when life grows it spreads towards the outside, but when man dies he shrinks withinwards. Old age means to have shrunk withinwards.

The truth is that most probably all the diseases of old people are deep down rooted in death.

Usually people say that such and such person died because of such and such a sickness. But I think it would be more appropriate to say that such and such person is sick because of death. What happens is that the possibility of death makes a person vulnerable to all kinds of diseases. As soon as a person feels that he is moving towards death, all the doors open up to various diseases and he Starts catching hold of them. Even if a healthy person comes to know for sure that he is going to die tomorrow, he will fall sick. Everything was alright, all the reports were normal, the X-ray was normal, the blood pressure was within normal limits, the pulse was alright; the stethoscope was conveying that everything was perfect. But if a person becomes convinced completely that tomorrow he is going to die, then you will see that he Starts catching a variety of diseases. He will catch as many diseases in twenty-four hours that it would be difficult to catch them in twenty-four lifetimes.

What has happened to this person? He has opened himself up to all kinds of diseases. He has stopped resisting. Since he was sure of his death, he has moved away from his consciousness which was within him acting as a wall and forming a barrier against all the diseases. Now he has become ready for his death and the diseases Start coming. And that is why a retired person dies soon.

So everybody wishing to retire should understand this before they retire. They die earlier by as much as five or six years. The one who would have died at the age of seventy, will die when he is only sixty-five; the one who would have died at the age of eighty, will die when he is seventy-five. Those ten, fifteen years of retirement will be spent in preparing for death; he will not accomplish anything else, because now he knows that he is of no use in life. There is no work for him, no one greets him on the road.

It was different when he was in the Office. Now no one even looks at him, because now they have to greet someone else. Everything works on economics. New people are there in the Office, so people will have to greet them. They cannot afford to go on greeting this man as well. They will forget him. Now he suddenly realizes that he has become useless. He feels uprooted. He is of no use to anybody. Even the children are busy with their wives, going out to movies. The people he knew have slowly started ending up in the cemetery. He has become useless for the very people who needed him earlier. Suddenly he becomes vulnerable, he opens up completely for death.

When is the consciousness of man healthy from within? First, when he Starts feeling his inner consciousness. Usually we do not feel the inner; all we feel is the body - the hand, the leg, the head, the heart. There are no feelings of that which he is. Our whole awareness is focused on the house and not on the dweller of the house.

This is a very dangerous Situation, because if the house Starts falling down tomorrow then I will think that I am falling, and this itself will become my sickness. But if I come to know that I am separate from the house - I am only residing in it, even if the house collapses I will still remain - then this will make a big difference, a basic difference. Then the fear of death will fade away.

Without meditation the fear of death never vanishes. So, the first meaning of meditation is awareness of oneself. As long as we are in consciousness, our consciousness is always an awareness about something, it is never about itself. That is why when we are sitting alone we Start feeling sleepy, because there is nothing to do. If we are reading a paper or listening to the radio, then we feel a little alert. If we leave a person alone in a dark room then he will feel sleepy, because since you cannot see anything you do not require your consciousness. If you cannot see anything then what can you do except sleep? There does not seem to be any other solution. If you are alone, there is darkness, no one to talk to, nothing to think about, then sleep will envelop you. There is no other way.

Remember that sleep and meditation are alike in one sense, and different in another. Sleep means that you are alone but you are in a slumber. Meditation means that you are alone but awake. This is the only difference. If you can remain awake about yourself when you are alone.

One day a person sitting with Buddha was fidgeting with his big toe. Buddha asked him, "Why are you moving your toe?"

The person replied, "Forget it, it was just moving. I was not even aware of it."

Buddha said, "Your toe is moving and you do not even know? Whose toe is it? Is it yours?"

The man said, "It is mine - but why have you deviated from what you were saying? Please continue."

Buddha said, "I will not continue with my talk anymore because the person I was talking to is unconscious. And remain aware of your toe movement in future. That will create double awareness in you. In the awareness of the toe will be born the awareness of the watcher as well."

Awareness is always double-pointed. If we experiment with it, then one side of it will go outwards and the other inwards.

So the first meaning of meditation is that we start becoming aware of our bodies and ourselves. And if this awareness can increase then the fear of death will fade away.

And a medical science which cannot free man from the fear of death can never cure this disease which is man. Of course medical science tries hard; it tries to accomplish this by increasing our lifespan. But increasing your lifespan increases only the waiting period for death and nothing else. And it is better to wait for shorter period of time than a longer one. You make death even more pitiful by increasing the lifespan.

Do you know, there is a movement going on in those countries where medical science has increased the lifespan of people? This movement is for euthanasia. Old people are demanding that the Constitution should give them the right to die. They say that life has become arduous for them, and you are just keeping them hanging on in the hospitals. It has become possible: you can put a man on an oxygen cylinder and keep him hanging on endlessly. You can keep him alive, but that life will be worse than death. Only goodness knows how many people in Europe and America are lying in hospitals in upside down and in other strange positions, hooked up to oxygen cylinders. They do not have the right to die, and they are demanding to be given the right to die.

My understanding is that by the end of this twentieth Century most of the developed countries in the world will have the right to die added as man's birthright to their constitutions, because a doctor has no right to keep a person alive against his wishes.

By increasing the age of a person you cannot remove the fear of death from him. By making a person healthy you can make his life more happy but not fearless. Fearlessness comes in only one Situation: when man comes to know that there is something in him that never dies. This understanding is absolutely essential.

Meditation is the realization of this immortality. That which is my interiority, never dies and that which is my outside, always dies. And that is why you should treat the outer, the body, medically so that as long as it lives it lives happily, and kindle the remembrance of that which is within you so that even if death is at your doorstep, you are not afraid. Meditation from within and medication on the outside can make the medical science a complete science.

According to me, meditation and medicine are two poles of the one science, but their connecting links are, as yet, missing. But slowly, slowly they are coming closer to each other. Today, in most of the major hospitals of America, a hypnotherapist has become essential. Hypnosis is not meditation, but this is a good step. At least it shows that there is an understanding that something needs to be done about the consciousness of man, and that just treating the body is not enough.

As I see, if hypnotherapists are coming into hospitals today, meditation will come tomorrow. It will come later, it will take a little time. After hypnotherapy every hospital will have a department of meditation. This should happen, then we will be able to treat man as a whole. The body will be taken care of by the doctors, the mind by the psychologists and psychiatrists, and the soul by meditation.

The day that hospitals accept man as a whole, as a totality, and then treat him as such, will be a day of great benediction in man's life. I ask you to think in this direction so that this day may come soon.

I am grateful that you listened to my talk with such love and silence. To end, I offer my respectful greetings to the godliness dwelling within each of you. Please, accept my greetings.